Library

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1954

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Wisbech.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour of submitting to you my report on the general health of the Borough for the past year, ending 31st December, 1954.

General Statistics.

Area 4,666 acres.
Estimated resident population mid-1954, 17,170.
Rateable Value £91,175.
Sum realised by a penny rate, £345.
Number of inhabited houses, about 5,281.

Live Births.

	Total	*M.*	*F.*
Legitimate	272	124	148
Illegitimate	23	17	6

Birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population mid-1954, 17·18.

Still Births.

	Total	*M.*	*F.*
Legitimate	4	2	2
Illegitimate	1	1	0

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births, 18·05

Deaths	285	144	141

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated average population, 16·5.

Deaths From Puerperal Causes:—

	Deaths	*Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births*
Puerperal sepsis	0	0
Other puerperal causes	0	0

Death Rate of Infants under 1 Year of Age:—

All infants per 1,000 live births	3·38
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	3·67
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	0
Deaths from cancer (all ages)	53
Deaths from measles (all ages)	0
Deaths from whooping cough (all ages)	0
Deaths from diarrhoea (under two years of age)	0
Deaths from motor vehicle accidents	6

The comparable figures for towns of approximately the same size are as follows:—

Birth rate per 1,000	15·7
Death rate per 1,000	11.3
Death rate of infants under 1 year of age	24·3

In the Borough there is a School Clinic, a Tubercular Clinic, two General Hospitals, a Hospital for chronic aged and sick female patients, and an Orthopaedic Clinic held weekly at the North Cambridgeshire Hospital. Infectious Diseases are accommodated at Peterborough and East Dereham Isolation Hospitals.

Excellent Motor Ambulance facilities are available, whilst Diphtheria Antitoxin and Pathological and Bacteriological examinations are provided when necessary.

Public Health Staff.

The duties connected with this are carried out by the M.O.H. who is a part-time officer, the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, the Borough Senior and Additional Sanitary Inspectors, all full-time officers, together with those of the Council's employees who are specially needed for sanitary work.

Infant and Child Welfare.

The Infant and Child Welfare Clinic in Norwich Road is held weekly on Friday afternoons, and is well attended.

Welfare Attendances for 1954

Number of children who attended during the year	401
Number of children who attended for the first time, and who at their first attendance were under 1 year	165
Number of children attending born in 1954	149
Number of children attending born in 1953	143
Number of children attending born 1952-1949	109
Total number of attendances made by children during the year.	
1. Under 1 year of age	2647
2. 1 year of age but under 2 years	690
3. 2 years of age but under 5 years	458
Total	3795

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Number of children under the age of 5 years who have completed a full course of immunisation against Diphtheria during the year	144
Between the ages of 5-9 years	45

HOUSING.

FUTURE REQUIREMENTS.

Applicants on waiting list at end of year	538

BUILDING.

Houses completed in 1954:—	
Wisbech Corporation	96
Private Enterprise	26
Total post war houses completed & occupied	626
Work in hand, Corporation	76
Work in hand, Private Enterprise	18
Waiting list, Corporation	538

WATER.

CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS.

Appearance	Clear and bright
pH.	7·3
Alkalinity	192
Chlorine as Chlorides (p.p.m.)	23·4
Chlorine (free) (p.p.m.)	Nil
Hardness Carbonate (p.p.m.)	192
Hardness Non-Carbonate (p.p.m.)	74
Total Hardness (p.p.m.)	266

BACT. COUNT PER MILLION.

48 hours @ 37° C.	No counts
72 hours @ 22° C.	No counts

BACT. COLI PER 100 MILLION.

Presumptive	Absent
Confirmatory	Absent
Most probable Number	—

REMARKS.

The above result indicates a water of the highest bacterial purity, pure and wholesome in character, and suitable as a public supply for drinking and domestic purposes.

EXTENSIONS.

Borough Schemes	4″ pipe 293 yards
Housing Sites	3″ pipe 446 yards
Housing Sites	4″ pipe 134 yards
Other extensions	6″ pipe 180 yards
New connections to the mains	121

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 AND 1948.

PART I OF THE ACT.

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	*Number on Register*	*Inspections*	*Written Notices*	*Occupiers Prosecuted*
1. Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	28	18	—	—
2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authorities	103	47	—	—
3. Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authorities (excluding outworkers' premises).	—	—	—	—
Total	131	65	—	—

2. Cases in which defects were found.

Number of cases in which defects were found

Particulars	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	Referred By H. M. Inspector	Number of Prosecutions instituted
Want of cleanliness	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature ...	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences—					
(*a*) insufficient	3	2	—	—	—
(*b*) unsuitable or defective ...	—	—	—	—	—
(*c*) not separate for sexes...	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
Total	3	2	—	—	—

NOTIFICATIONS OF TUBERCULOSIS.

Age periods	New cases: Pulmonary M.	New cases: Pulmonary F.	New cases: Non-Pulmonary M.	New cases: Non-Pulmonary F.	Deaths: Pulmonary M.	Deaths: Pulmonary F.	Deaths: Non-Pulmonary M.	Deaths: Non-Pulmonary F.
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
65 and over	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	4	4	0	0	0	2	0	0

I remain, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Very faithfully yours,

H. LESLIE GROOM, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Medical Officer of Health.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

	Total cases Notified	Deaths
Smallpox	0	0
Scarlet Fever	15	0
Diphtheria	0	0
Pneumonia	22	13
Erysipelas	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	0
Enteric Fever..... ..	0	0
Measles	1	0
Acute Encephalitis	0	0
Whooping Cough	38	0
Paratyphoid Fever	1	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	2	0
Food poisoning	3	0
Dysentery	10	0

Report of the Senior Sanitary Inspector for the Year 1954

Public Health Department,
Albion Place,
Nene Quay,
Wisbech.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Wisbech

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my report for the year 1954, being my thirty-fifth Annual Report. This report, as usual, again appears mainly in summary form and covers the work of my department in the interests of the general health of the Borough.

Public Health Acts.

Inspections numbering 396 have been made of premises where matters remedial under the Public Health Acts generally existed. In four cases only was it necessary to report matters to the Public Health Committee for statutory action where informal action had failed, the whole of the remaining cases brought the desired results after informal action by preliminary notice or interviews. Details of the work executed appear in the summaries at the end of this report.

We are again indebted to the Manager of the Wisbech and District Water Board for monthly reports of examinations of samples of drinking water from the Board's supply. In every case the results have shown a water of the highest standard of bacterial purity.

Housing.

Housing conditions in the Borough have not altered substantially since my last annual report. Repairs have been executed to many old properties so as to render them wind- and water-tight, but much work of this kind, however, is still needed in order to cope with general deterioration. In this respect, repairs have been carried out at 53 houses in the Borough, 6 houses were reported as repairable where formal action was taken and 9 houses were considered to be incapable of repair at a reasonable cost, 6 of the latter were subsequently demolished. A move was made towards the end of the year and a survey of the town was commenced in order to obtain a broad estimate of the number of sub-standard houses that could be considered for clearance. In the meantime the work of patching must go on until sufficient and suitable houses are provided. Legal Proceedings were taken for non-compliance with a housing repair notice and an order of abatement within two months was obtained.

Infectious Diseases.

The Town has again been very free from infectious disease. As each case has occurred the house has been visited to ascertain the source and the usual disinfection has taken place after removal to hospital or recovery.

Factories and Workshops.

Sufficient sanitary accommodation has been provided at two workshops and work was in hand at the end of the year providing sufficient accommodation at one factory in the Borough.

Certificates of means of escape in case of fire were issued for two factories.

Common Lodging Houses.

There are two Common Lodging houses in the Borough, registered to receive 45 male lodgers. These premises have been inspected periodically and have been found to be carried on in a satisfactory manner. One of these premises is very old and structurally poor, but internal repairs have taken place in an endeavour to keep the same in a reasonable condition.

Meat and Food.

Meat and Food along with Housing are the two main duties falling to the lot of your inspectors. Slaughterhouse inspections are made twice daily and also Sunday and evening visits when necessary for the examination of carcases. The amount of Food condemned is shown in the following summaries.

Drastic changes occurred in the month of July when the Ministry of Food relinquished control of the slaughterhouses and returned them to private owners. This caused great concern amongst the butchers, as, of the fifteen slaughterhouses in use prior to the war, only seven remained in a fit state to be licensed, the remaining eight had been either demolished or put into other use, Licences were therefore issued in respect of the seven slaughterhouses.

On the 17th September the Ministry of Food Fatstock Guarantee Scheme was commenced and the deadweight certification of pigs under this scheme was given me to carry out. This work although putting strain on the time at my disposal was done and at the end of the year 280 certificates had been issued.

FRESH MEAT CONDEMNED.

Whole Carcases of Beef	11
Part Carcases of Beef	45
Whole Carcases of Pork	27
Part Carcases of Pork	59
Whole Carcases of Mutton	3
Part Carcases of Mutton	3
Whole Carcases of Veal	1
Part Carcases of Veal	1
Ox Offals (complete)	16
Part Ox Offals	55
Ox Livers (complete)	62
Part Ox Livers	24
Ox Heads and Tongues	32
Pigs Livers	5
Pigs Plucks	59
Part Pigs Plucks	6
Sheeps Livers	3

CAUSES FOR CONDEMNATION.

	lbs
Tuberculosis	6,736
Inflammation	3,010
Congestion	1,961
Bruised	1,181
Dropsy	1,014
Moribund	552
Cirrhosis	522
Emaciation	521
Pyoemia	452
T. Pericarditis	369
Actinomycosis	360
Erysipelas	301
Septicoemia	258
Swine Fever ?	253
Degeneration	210
Parasites	169
Fracture	141
Rash	93
Hydroemia	60
C. Angioma	60
Blood Spot	60
Pleurisy	50
Fibrous	33
Abscess	31
Pneumonia	5
Tumour	3
Cystic Kidney	2
	18,407

Total weight of Fresh Meat condemned:—

8 tons 4 cwts. 1 qr. 11 lbs.

OTHER FOOD CONDEMNED.

Tins	1,213
Jars	10
Packets	36
Boxes	2
Bottles	3
Melons	5
Chops	5
Pork Pies	45
Steak Pies	6
Orange Juice	55 gallons
Swiss Rolls	13½ dozen
Carrots	12 tons 12 cwts.
	lbs.
Cheese	135
Sausages	92
Ham	11
Bacon	95
Confectionery	45
Fish	61
Various	11

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number Killed	1567	202	47	3317	7731
Number inspected	1567	202	47	3317	7731
All diseases except Tuberculosis : Whole carcases condemned	6		1	3	23
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	181		1	6	110
Percentage of the number inspected affected by disease other than Tuberculosis	10·57%		2·13%	0·24%	1·72%
Tuberculosis only: Whole carcases condemned	5		—	—	4
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	53		—	—	18
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	3·28%		—	—	0·29%

Licences.

Licences in force at 31st December, 1954

Licences to Slaughter or Stun animals	39
Licences for Slaughterhouses	7
Licence for Knackers Yard	1
Licensed Gangmasters	12
Licensed Campers	9
Fellmongers Licence	1
Licences to keep Pet Shops	3
Common Lodging Houses	2
Ice Cream Licences	75
Licences to use Premises for Manufacture of Preserved Foods	5
Licences to use Premises under Rag Flock Act, 1951	3
Dealers Licences to sell T.T. Milk	6
Dealers Licences to sell Pasteurised Milk	10
Dealers Licences to sell Sterilised Milk	10
Supplementary Milk Licences to sell T.T.	5
Supplementary Milk Licences to sell Pasteurised Milk	4
Supplementary Milk Licences to sell Sterilised Milk	2

Rodent Control.

This work is carried out successfully by one operator. The twice yearly treatment of sewers has been undertaken so as to qualify for grant aid.

The following additional operations have taken place and the cost of these operations have been recovered where applicable:—

Prebaits laid	2,153
Poison baits	3,039
Bodies recoverd	596
Estimated kill	1,455

Summary of Work Done During Year

Inspection of Premises.

Inspections under Public Health Acts	245
Inspections under Housing Acts	241
Inspections under Food and Drugs Acts	40
Inspections after Infectious Diseases	28
Inspections of Factories and Workshops	35
Inspections of Shops and Food Stores	30
Inspections of Milkshops and Dairies	9
Inspections of Slaughterhouses	959
Inspections of Caravans	28
Inspections of Common Lodging Houses	10
Inspections of Works in progress	228
Inspections for Rodent Control	63
Inspections for Housing Applications	46
Inspections for Nuisances	151
Premises treated for Vermin	16
Re-inspections as to compliance with notices	227
Smoke tests applied to drains	9
Water tests applied to drains	18
Number of Complaints investigated	313
Miscellaneous	13

Work Carried out Under Supervision or in Compliance with Notices

Drainage.

Drains repaired, cleansed, etc	63
New pipe drains provided	16
New ventilation pipes provided	2
Connections to sewer	35
Waste pipes trapped	6
Inspection chambers built on drains	22
New cesspools built	2
Cesspools emptied	3
Cesspools repaired	1
New gullies provided	6

Sanitary Conveniences.

Privies converted into water closets	1
New water closets provided	6
Closets repaired, cleansed, etc.	3
Flushing cisterns provided to W.C's.	1
Flushing cisterns repaired	4
New pedestal pans provided	2
New sanitary pails provided	2

Factories and Workshops.

Workshops provided with sufficient sanitary accommodation	2

Slaughterhouses.

Repaired	1

Miscellaneous.

Houses repaired	53
Houses demolished	6
Accumulations of refuse removed	6

I can again report steady progress in the matters coming within the purview of my department and the year has been good from a Public Health point of view. I would offer my thanks to the Public Health Committee for their guidance in the various matters brought to their notice. Especially I would thank the Chairman and my colleagues for the assistance given during the time I was away ill.

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

E. J. SUTCLIFFE, F.S.I.A.,

Senior Sanitary Inspector.